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ABSTRACT

ReQuest is a reciprocal questioning technique in which the teacher serves as a model of questioning behavior for the student. Following a briefing period by the teacher, the activity begins with the student and teacher silently reading the first sentence of a story. Teacher and student exchange questions on a sentence-by-sentence reading of the material, until the student can make a logical prediction of what is going to happen in the rest of the story. An expanded and specific set of directions for classroom use of the ReQuest system for preservice and inservice teachers is also provided in this paper. The processes of selecting appropriate material, giving rules, directing the questioning sequence, selecting appropriate questions, eliciting predictions of story content, directing silent reading, and comparing predictions are discussed in a procedural outline. (KS)

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SAY, MAN! SO YOU WANT TO KNOW ABOUT ReQUEST!

ReQuest is a reciprocal questioning technique where the teacher serves as a model of questioning behavior for the student. As originally devised by Manzo (1969), ReQuest can be utilized to improve comprehension skills on a one-to-one basis.

Following a briefing period by the teacher, the activity (Manzo, 1969) begins with the teacher and student silently reading the first sentence of a story. The teacher then closes his book and is asked questions by the student. Next, the student closes his book and is asked questions by the teacher. The teacher attempts to serve as an active model of good questioning behavior and also is alert to give any good student questions verbal reinforcement. ReQuest is continued on a sentence-by-sentence reading until the student can make a logical prediction of what is going to happen in the rest of the story. The use of any traditional follow-up activity is suggested.

Recently, ReQuest has found application in a classroom setting with small groups of students. In a basal reading group, for example, it is used as an alternative to the first steps in a Directed Reading Activity (DRA) to provide motivation and purpose for reading.

In attempting to teach preservice and inservice teachers to use ReQuest with a classroom reading group, the authors found it necessary to develop an expanded and more specific set of directions for ReQuest. A seven (7) step sequence was developed as part of a training module.

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Steps to Follow in Using ReQuest

1. Selecting Appropriate Material
2. Giving the Rules
3. Directing the Questioning Sequence
4. Selecting Appropriate Questions
5. Eliciting Predictions of Story Content
6. Directing the Silent Reading
7. Comparing Predictions

1. SELECTING APPROPRIATE MATERIAL

The teacher will:

a. Choose a basal story at the instructional level of the students.

b. Select a story of fiction or prose which contains a setting, characters, and an unfamiliar plot.

c. Select a story from which it is possible to predict what the story is about after reading:

a few paragraphs for 2nd grade text
about 4 to 6 paragraphs for 4th grade text
about 8 to 10 paragraphs for 6th grade text

d. Identify the first point (P_1) in the story where prediction of the story content will be elicited from the students. The plot development, rather than the eventual outcome of the story, should be predicted.

e. Identify the point in the story beyond which ReQuest will not be continued if students are unable to predict

story content. The teacher should identify two additional prediction points (P_2 and P_3) in addition to P_1 to aid in deciding when to stop ReQuest. If P_3 does not result in the students making predictions, then the activity should be stopped!

f. Select the amount to be read for each questioning sequence. Begin one sentence at a time with ALL grade levels for the first few sentences of the story. Then proceed

one sentence at a time for grade 2

a few sentences at a time for grade 4

a paragraph at a time for grade 6

2. GIVING THE RULES

The teacher will:

a. Give the rules for playing ReQuest.

b. Be certain students understand the rules.

3. DIRECTING THE QUESTIONING SEQUENCE

The teacher will:

a. Direct joint silent reading of the first sentence.

b. Close the book after reading the first sentence.

c. Direct the students to keep their books open.

d. Direct the students to ask questions.

e. Answer the questions asked by the students.

f. Request rephrasing of unclear questions.

g. Clarify the students' questions only as a last resort.

h. Reinforce students for asking good questions.

i. Determine when the students have finished asking questions.

j. Direct the students to close their books.

k. Ask the students questions.

4. SELECTING APPROPRIATE QUESTIONS

The teacher will:

a. Ask questions which sample from all the categories of questions as suggested in Johnson and Kress (1965).

TYPES OF QUESTIONS (F I V E)

FACT

What in the story says ...?

INFERENCE

From these clues, what do you think ...?

VOCABULARY

What does the word _____ mean?

EXPERIENCE

What has happened to you that makes you think ...?

b. Ask questions which are different from the students' questions.

c. Integrate information from previous sentences when selecting questions.

d. Employ problem-solving strategies when student questioning deteriorates. Discuss the rules and purpose of the

activity with the students again.

5. ELICITING PREDICTIONS OF STORY CONTENT

The teacher will:

a. Elicit predictions of story content at the earliest prediction stage.

b. Ask each student to validate his individual prediction. "What have you read thus far that makes you believe this story is about ...?"

c. Make a list of the suggested predictions of story content.

d. Ask students to rank order the predictions of story content from least likely to most likely.

6. DIRECTING THE SILENT READING

The teacher will direct the students to read silently to the end of the story.

7. COMPARING PREDICTIONS

The teacher will:

a. Lead a discussion in which the students compare their predictions of story content with the actual story content.

b. Encourage the students to select from their predictions which ones might also have been logically used to complete the story.

c. Avoid labeling the actual story content as written as "right" and students' individual predictions as "wrong." Students should see that the story could have had several plausible endings and might be encouraged to rewrite the story using their own individual predictions of story content.

SUMMARY

In addition to the above procedural guide, the authors have developed (1) an evaluation form to be used by teachers and/or supervisors who observe the technique and (2) a 16mm film showing a demonstration of the technique. The usual procedure for training pre- and inservice teachers begins with the presentation of the Manzo article (1969) as an outside reading assignment. Class time then is devoted to a discussion of the steps outlined in this article followed by a viewing of the demonstration film. Next, the evaluation form is presented and discussed prior to a second viewing of the film. This time through the pre- and inservice teachers are actually given an opportunity to rate the effectiveness of the demonstration lesson. The next session is devoted to small group simulation which in turn is followed by use of the technique with "live kids" --- heaven forbid! The whole process fits very nicely into either an undergraduate or graduate practicum course.

The authors would appreciate any reaction to the ReQuest directions and may be contacted through:

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